"Expert Group on estimation of proportion and number of poor" under the Chairmanship of Late Prof. Lakdawala to work out the population Below Poverty Line. According to these estimates the BPL population works out to 32.03 crores, i.e., 35.97 per cent of the total population of the country which will be covered under the Targeted PDS. A Statement on TPDS was made in the Rajya Sabha and the guidelines laid on the Table of the House on 24.2.1997.

The State Governments/UT Administrations have been asked to complete all necessary arrangements as per the guidelines for implementation of the Targeted PDS. The States of Tripura and Haryana have implemented Targeted PDS w.e.f. 1.5.1997. Most States/UTs have made substantial progress in making the necessary arrangements and have indicated their readiness to implement the Targeted PDS w.e.f. 1.6.1997 except Punjab, Delhi and Meghalaya.

Extension of Essential commodities Act beyond August, 1997

4473. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether ASSOCHAM has urged upon Government not to extend the Essential Commodities Act beyond August this year, when its present term is likely to expire;

(b) if so, the grounds adduced by ASSOCHAM in support of their demand; and

(c) Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) No representation has been received from ASSOCHAM in this regard.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Quota of edible Oil for Andhra Pradesh

4474. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government have been getting the required quota of edible oil from Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof, specifically with reference to Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether it is a fact that the quota asked for by the Andhra Pradesh Government was not sanctioned;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to

enhance quota of edible oil of Andhra Pradesh; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (f) Supply of imported palmolein through the Public Distribution System (PDS) is supplemental and is meant to augment open market availability during the lean season/festival period. Unlike other PDS commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, palmolein is not issued on an entitlement basis. Taking into account the fact that most of the edible oils are under the OGL list for import, and the resultant easy availability of oil in the market with stable price, Government decided to import a limited quantity of palmolein during the period February to October, 1996. The States were requested to indicate their requirement and allocation was made within the total quantity imported namely 2.02 lakh MTs.

Government of Andhra Pradesh had requested for 1,80,000 MTs of imported palmolein for the PDS during the year 1996 against which an allocation of 63,000 MTs was made to the State out of the total imported quantity of palmolein of 2.02 lakh MTs.

The allocation of imported edible oil through PDS is based on various factors like total import for Central Pool, inter-se requirements of States/UTs, past lifting, open market availability and prices. These factors are likely to continue to determine the quota of edible oil released to States/UTs including Andhra Pradesh whenever imports are made in future.

Non-Lifting of allocated Food-Grains quota by Bihar

4475. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bihar is not lifting its entire quota of foodgrains allocated to it for PDS resulting in scarcity of foodgrains and other rationed items at fair price shops;

(b) if so, the details of wheat, rice, sugar and other essential commodities allocated to Bihar during the last three years, year-wise and the quantities actually lifted by the State during the said period; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to ensure that PDS in Bihar does not suffer due to the apathy of the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (c) The allocations made to Government of Bihar and lifting made by them during the last three years, year-wise and commodity-wise are given in the statement enclosed. (*see* below). It may be observed from the statement that lifting is less than the allocations made. Primary factors of non-lifting of foodgrains by Bihar are easy availability, lower prices in the open market and good foodgrain production in the State during 1994-95. Government of India have decided to streamline the PDS with its focus on the poor by issuing special cards to families below poverty line and selling foodgrains under PDS to them at specially subsidised prices with better monitoring of delivery system. Guidelines containing the details for Targeted PDS have already been issued to all States/UTs including Bihar in this regard. These guidelines were laid on the floor of both